

REMARKS

Initially, Applicants would like to express appreciation to the Examiner for the detailed Official Action provided and for the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claims 1-3, as well as for the helpful suggestions as to overcoming the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

By the present amendment, claims 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12 and 17 have been amended and claims 5, 11 and 16 have been canceled. Claims 1- 4, 6-10, 12-15 and 17 are currently pending. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the outstanding rejections and allowance of claims 1- 4, 6-10, 12-15 and 17 in the present application. Such action is respectfully requested and is now believed to be appropriate and proper.

The Examiner has objected to claims 4, 6 and 10 for containing various "informalities". By the present amendment, claims 4 and 6 have been amended in the manner suggested by the Examiner, and Applicants respectfully request that the objection to these claims be withdrawn. Furthermore, Applicant respectfully submits that the objection to claim 10 is without merit, since the meaning clearly intended is that while there are at least "first and second" elements recited, there could be additional elements, such as "third" or "third and fourth" elements, etc. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 10 can be readily understood and fully complies with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, and that the objection thereto should also be withdrawn.

The Examiner has rejected claims 4-6, 9-12, 16, and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable over PARKS et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,239,445). Applicants note that the PARKS et al. patent shows a device including a set of parallel wires 150i between a connector 100 and a connector 102, and a set of wires 150i in which some wires are twisted between the connector 102 and a connector 104. However, contrary to the Examiner's position, PARKS et al. fails to disclose a main harness connector and a sub harness connector that are mutually engagable as recited in presently amended claims 4, 9, and 12, or a first and second main harness, a first and second sub harness, and first and second end connectors as recited in presently amended claim 10. Accordingly, since PARKS et al. fails to disclose each and every element recited in amended claims 4, 9, 10 and 12, the rejection of these claims is no longer appropriate under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), nor would the subject matter of these claims be obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the rejection of independent claims 4, 9, 10 and 12, as well as the rejection of claims 6, 7, 13-15 and 17 dependent thereon, and provide an early indication of the allowance thereof.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that the present response is proper and that none of the references of record, considered alone or in any proper combination thereof,

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anticipate or render obvious Applicants' invention as recited in claims 1- 4, 6-10, 12-15 and 17. The applied references of record have been discussed and distinguished, while significant claimed features of the present invention have been pointed out.

Accordingly, consideration of the present response, reconsideration of the outstanding Official Action, and allowance of all of the claims in the present application are respectfully requested and now believed to be appropriate.

Any amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attached thereto.

Applicants have made a sincere effort to place the present application in condition for allowance and believe that they have now done so.

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Should there be any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below listed number.

Respectfully submitted,
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